

**MEETING**  
FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL  
November 8, 2002  
Family Outreach Conference Room  
1212 Helena Avenue  
Helena, MT

Members Present: Kelly Johnson (Chair), Gwen Beyer (Vice-Chair), Susie Morrison, Brian Lenhardt, Ted Maloney, Anne Marie Johnson, Denise King, Barb Stefanic, Sylvia Danforth, Sandi Marisdotter, Novelene Martin, Phyllis Astheimer, Lynda Korth, Sandy McGennis, Cris Volinkaty, Ron Herman, Corliss Scott, Liz Harter, Patti Russ, Dr. Mary Anne Guggenheim, Lucy Hart-Paulson, Dan McCarthy, Gerald & Maria Pease.  
Mike Cooney (pm).

Members Absent: Jackie Jandt, Shelley Korth

Others Present: Richard Van Haecke (Part C Coordinator), Jackie Emerson (DDP Administrative Support)

**WELCOME**

1. Kelly called the meeting to order and welcomed all members and guests.
2. Those present introduced themselves.
3. Changes were made in the agenda: A family story will be presented before the Old Business part of the meeting. Ted will report on the Project Directors meeting before the Committee Reports. Jeff Sturm, Jannis Conselyea, and Tim Plaska from DDP will come at 11:00 to report on the budget. After lunch Deb Swingley from DDPAC has asked to address the Council.

**FAMILY STORY:**

Marti Lawson of the Miles City area told of her son, Bradley, who suffers from cerebral palsy, asthma, and chronic lung disease. DEAP has greatly helped Marti deal with the disability and encouraged Bradley's development. Because of the encouragement and support of DEAP, Bradley has been in preschool for 2 years. DEAP provides evaluation and diagnostic clinics, PT/OT and speech therapy, respite and hab aid. Bradley cannot dress or feed himself but is now in the process of getting a power wheelchair and communication aids, which will help him be more independent. Marti was very appreciative of the help DEAP has given her in getting materials and helping her learn how to teach Bradley to do things on his own.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. The minutes from the Summit in August were reviewed and approved.  
Sylvia Danforth made the motion to approve the minutes as they were. Cris Volinkaty seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of approval.

2. Wage and hour Law/Impact on Respite Care and Transportation –

Cris reported that because of the issue with the Waiver, CMS has required that the respite provider be paid directly instead of the agency paying the parent and the parent paying for respite. It was also required that the worker not be exempt from minimum wage and benefits. After study of the federal companionship law, a bill has been drafted for the next session that will help meet Waiver requirements and provide an exemption from minimum wage and benefits for respite workers. The bill will be carried by Representative Bob Lawson of Whitefish.

Sylvia: Cris is to be commended for all of her hard work on this very important issue.

(*Added agenda item*) Project Director's meeting -

Ted reported that this was the first time this meeting has been held in several years and included many different programs with Early Intervention and people from many different aspects: staff, educators and advocates. Many different issues were discussed including reauthorization of Part C, mandating Part C, lead agency for Part C, and fully funding services for Special Education. There was concern over the lack of data on early intervention services and the performance indicators being looked at. There is much federal level discussion regarding the blending and coordinating of all childhood programs and looking at an early intervention system instead of individual programs.

3. Committee Reports –

- Public Awareness: The committee has not had a meeting. Child and Family Providers have been getting the message out about the possible budget cuts. Ted will schedule a meeting today.
- Complaint Procedures: Dan had called Sylvia but have not had a chance to get together for a meeting.

4. Workgroup Reports –

- Orientation Manual: Jackie has made changes and updates to the manual. Kelly asked how many need a new manual. Six will be ready for the next meeting.
- Brochure: Patti will get the information compiled and send to Jackie for a layout. It will have an overview of the Council.
- Website: Email any changes or suggestions to Jackie and she will okay them with Richard and get Heather to update on the website. If there were links you wanted listed from the last meeting email them to Jackie.

5. Council Housekeeping Issues –

- Executive Order: Copies of the new Executive Order were handed out. Changes need to be made to the membership that is listed in the Order.
- Membership:  
Changes have been made in the membership list and will be updated and sent out to all members.
  - Ron Herman replaces John Holbrook for State Auditor's Office/Insurance Commissioner. The Governor has already made the appointment.

- Corliss Scott will replace Sharon Wagner until a new Bureau Chief is hired at Children Health Services.  
Dr. Mary Anne Guggenheim made the nomination and Ted Maloney seconded the nomination. The vote passed unanimously.
- Lou Thompson from AMDD will be called to see if Dr. Deb Sanchez might be able to replace Jackie Jandt on the Council. Jackie has said that her office is very short staffed and she regrets that she might not be able to make meetings.
- Susie Morrison replaces Sue Forest as Personnel Rep/ University of Montana.  
Dan McCarthy made the nomination and Lucy Hart-Paulson seconded the nomination. The vote passed unanimously.

Voting issues. Although both individuals of a couple in the Parent Representatives may be listed in the membership, the two will only count as one vote and one on the role. The two will share one position.

*(Visit from Jeff Sturm, Jannis Conselyea, and Tim Plaska from DDP)*

Jeff reported on the budget:

The budget numbers are changing constantly. DDP is currently refinancing as many as possible from General Fund to Medicaid in order to save General Fund dollars. The effort has allowed us to come up with around \$2 million that we have put back into the State budget in exchange for children's services. As of Tuesday the Governor has taken children's programs out of the list of service cuts. The DD Program goal is "no cuts". Child Providers will need to help with the effort to find money to put back into adult programs. The problem is that by July all the refinancing will be done and if we face the same budget crisis in 2 years there will be no more leverage in that area.

DDP has been directed to study the possibility of charging co-pay for services in order to generate revenue. We are trying to keep the amount of the co-pay low enough that it will have little or no impact on people's ability to get services. If Medicaid-eligible the person must apply for Medicaid. But we will have to see if it will generate enough money to make a difference and how much it will cost in added administrative cost.

Our first priority is DD but our 2<sup>nd</sup> priority is optional services and possibly generating money to put back in to things like pharmacy services.

The co-pay study underway will result in a report to be presented to the Legislature in January. We prefer not to cut any services to any people and we will try to find other ways than to cut. We are thankful to all for their work with the surveys.

Keeping the children's services is a major victory but we can't let up.

*(Back to agenda: Membership)*

- Gwen Beyer submitted a letter of resignation. Region V will need a new Parent Rep. Cris will try to find one.

- Sylvia submitted the name of a Parent Rep for Region I to replace Millie Kindle who resigned in August:  
Krista Bodvig was nominated.  
Cris made the nomination. Anne Marie seconded the nomination. The vote passed unanimously.

Bylaws: Changes will be made to update the term Field Service Specialist to Quality Improvement Specialist. The number of Regions does not need to be changed because DDP has chosen to stay with 5 Regions for the present time and Dain Christianson will supervise Regions I and II.

Ted made the motion to make that change. Sylvia seconded the motion.

6. Certification Issues: Richard needs a committee to help go over the issues and recommended changes that have been sent to him. Susie, Sylvia, Ted, Brian and Richard will form the Certification committee. Richard will send them the information and call to set up a meeting.

#### 7. ISSC Recommendation for Part C/GF FE&S

Richard reported after discussion with Jeff that the State is not in a position to go forward at this time. Jeff would like public opinion as to the number of providers now versus more providers.

Ted commented that at the DC meeting the consensus was that, compared with the states with more providers, our system was more family friendly.

Richard will document the completion of the activity.

Ted recommended writing a letter from the Council saying “our understanding is that this recommendation is off the table...” It was decided that the original committee would pen the letter and send it around for other members to read.

Sylvia noted that people needed to be thanked for their effort to maintain services. Kelly will write the letter.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> letter to follow up on ISSC activities will be written by Ted, Mary Anne and Kelly.

### NEW BUSINESS:

#### 1. Part C Coordinator’s Report:

- Child Count: The December child count letter and forms will be sent out soon.
- Annual Performance Report: Richard has heard from Jackie Twining-Martin that there are new requirements.
- FSS Certification Results: The Certification Panel met at the end of October to review applications from 10 people for FSS Comprehensive Certification. Of the ten, 9 were certified and one needs only to better demonstrate a couple of the competencies. Sylvia commended Richard for getting out the results of the review so quickly.
- Proposed budget for the 2004-2005 biennium: This point was covered by Jeff during his visit to the Council. (Mary Anne commented that people should think about a type of revenue that could be attached specifically for certain services instead of depending on General Fund monies and hoping to come up with these dollars.)

(break from agenda)

DDPAC (Developmental Disabilities Planning and Advisory Council): Deb Swingley has asked to address the Council.

- Deb handed out copies of the DDPAC Directory of Services for People with Developmental Disabilities.
- In the 2002-2006 long range State Plan, DDPAC has made plans to become an individual entity separate from the Developmental Disabilities Program. The council would be federally funded. They have been granted an appointment to present their request to the Governor on November 15. Deb is asking the FSSAC to consider writing a letter in support of DDPAC's effort to become independent. Cris made the motion to provide a letter of support for DDPAC. Mary Anne seconded the motion. The vote passed unanimously.

(back to the agenda)

2. Preparation for the upcoming Legislative Session:

- Cris will be representing Regions 4 and 5 lobbying on Child and Family issues for children with developmental disabilities.
- 250-300 letters were sent to the Governor on budget cuts.
- Legislative forums were held.
- There is discussion with a firm out of Missoula of a marketing campaign regarding awareness of Part C services that would go statewide – but will be cancelled if the Governor's budget reflects that Part C will not be cut.
- The respite bill will be drafted within 2 weeks and ready to roll.

3. Agency Reports:

- OPI: Dan handed out copies of the report *Child Find, Referral and Evaluation: A Special Educator's Guide to Montana's Special Education Process* and said the report could be found on the web at [www.opi.state.mt.us/SpecialEd](http://www.opi.state.mt.us/SpecialEd) and has hyperlinks to other areas of interest. The report describes the six-step special education process for administrators and, while it is not written for parents, it has some useful material and forms as well as questions and answers that have been collected over the years.
- MSDB: Sandy introduced Steve Goettle from the School who explained the Family Advisor Program and the strategic plan to become a statewide resource to help coordinate between schools and providers and train educational interpreters.
- ChildCare: Patti handed out a sheet that reported the projected impacts that could result from possible reductions in the 2004-2005 Matching funds and TANF funds to the Early Childhood Services Bureau.
- Medical Professionals/Newborn Screening: Mary Anne reported that 20-30 years ago it only was possible to screen for 3 conditions but now with new technology it is possible to screen for another 25-30 conditions.
- University: Ted reported that the Personnel Preparation Grant request for proposal would be out soon and will be asking for a letter of support from the Council. It is a joint effort with the University involving on campus and distance learning.

- Child Find: Ted reported that the Child Find Grant group might ask for a letter of support from the Council. The data is looking great and outreach is a high federal priority.
- HeadStart: Anne Marie reported that there is new federal involvement, initiatives for how and what to teach, and a mandate to provide outcomes.
- Yellowstone Cooperative Education: Barb reported that she was having a hard time finding a speech pathologist and there is an increased need for para-educators. The birth-5 Child Find is going strong.
- Speech Therapy: Lucy reported that they were looking at reinstating the speech-training program when there is funding. They are looking for people to teach communications classes across the state. There may be the possibility of a distance or online learning program.

4. Meeting dates for next year.

- March 14
- May 30
- August 7 & 8 – Summit Meeting
- November 7

5. Nominations and elections of FSSAC Chair and Vice Chair.

- Chair: Kelly Johnson
- Vice-Chair: Brian Lenhardt

Sylvia made the nominations. Dan seconded the nominations. The vote passed unanimously.

Thank you to Gwen Beyer for 7 years of service on the Council!